

PLACE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Thursday, 25 October 2018

PRESENT – Councillors Carson (Chair), Mrs Culley, Donoghue, Kelly, Lyonette and Tostevin

APOLOGIES – Councillors Cossins, L Hughes, M Nicholson and Wright.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE –

OUTSIDE BODIES REPRESENTATIVE – Mark Wilson, Head of Transport, Tees Valley Combined Authority; and James Busby, Project Director Local Partnerships.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE – Ian Thompson (Assistant Director Community Services), Dave Winstanley (Assistant Director Capital Projects, Transport and Highways Planning), John Anderson, Dawn Taylor (Trading Standards and Animal Health Manager), Brian Graham (Head of Environmental Services) and Karen Graves (Democratic Officer)

P17 LEAD OFFICER AND DEMOCRATIC OFFICER

The Chair reported that both Dawn Taylor, Lead Officer and Karen Graves, Democratic Officer would no longer be supporting this Scrutiny Committee and wished to place on record the thanks of the Committee to them both for their invaluable help and assistance.

P18 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interests reported at the meeting.

P19 TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THIS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 6 SEPTEMBER 2018

Submitted – The Minutes (previously circulated) of the meeting of this Scrutiny Committee held on 6 September 2018. A member requested that paragraph 3 Page 2 be amended to show that CUL 030 actually referred to the Number of visits to the Dolphin Centre and not the Crown Street and Cockerton Libraries.

RESOLVED – That, with the above amendment, the Minutes be agreed as a correct record.

P20 MATTERS ARISING

The Chair referred to Minute 14(c) and advised Members that as investigations were still ongoing it was not timely to bring a report to this Scrutiny Committee. However, the Assistant Director, Highways, Design and Project advised that a report would be submitted to a future meeting on broader road safety within the Borough.

P21 TEES VALLEY COMBINED AUTHORITY TRANSPORT STRATEGY

The Head of Transport, Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) gave a PowerPoint Presentation on the Tees Valley Strategic Transport Plan (STP) which was currently being developed to support the delivery of the Strategic Economic Plan for the Tees Valley.

Reference was made to Transport for the North (TfN), a unique partnership, established in 2014, comprised of four development partners, eleven Local Enterprise Partners and nineteen Local Government partners. TfN was working to develop a strategic northern transport strategy to improve connectivity between economic centres in the north and provide a blueprint for building the Northern Powerhouse.

Details were provided of the Strategic Transport Plan (STP) Components and the TVCA Transport Framework for the rail, road, bus, cycle and pedestrian networks together with improvements for freight and access to Durham Tees Valley Airport.

Particular reference was made to the visions and emerging strategies to connect the Tees Valley; key challenges that had been encountered; and to the interventions and funding that had been secured to deliver the strategies.

Members were informed that approval for the STP would be sought at the TVCA Cabinet scheduled for 31 January 2019 and that a consultation exercise would then be undertaken closing in May 2019.

Clarification was sought on why bus travel alone was a vision and the other forms of transport a strategy and whether the powers of the new Act overcame some of the current constraints.

In relation to increasing the rail network relative to Darlington, Members were advised that whilst it was expensive to build railways and stations, Darlington needed more platforms and the bottle neck of services crossing the East Coast Main Line needed to be cleared.

It was also confirmed that there was unlikely to be an increase in rural bus services but the best service possible would be sought.

RESOLVED – (a) That the terms of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to The Head of Transport for his informative presentation.

(b) That the Head of Transport be invited to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee prior to the consultation exercise scheduled to be held in May 2019

P22 TEES VALLEY DRAFT WASTE STRATEGY

The Project Director, Local Partnerships gave a PowerPoint Presentation to Scrutiny on the Tees Valley Joint Waste Management Strategy which was currently being developed by the five Tees Valley Local Authorities and which outlined the options for the future waste treatments/disposal post 2025 when the existing contractual arrangements came to an end. Cabinet had given its approval to enter into consultation on the Joint Waste Management Strategy (JWMS) for the Tees Valley at its meeting held 11 September (Cabinet report also previously circulated).

The submitted report stated that the five Tees Valley Authorities were currently developing an Outline Business Case (OBC) for options on future waste treatments and disposal and that the new refreshed JWMS would cover the period from 2020-2035.

The Project Director, Local Partnerships gave further details and in doing so outlined the background to Local Partnerships, a joint venture between Local Government Association and HM Treasury and its role to help the public sector to delivery infrastructure projects more effectively and obtain commercial advantage and value for money.

In relation to waste management in the Tees Valley, it was reported that recycling and residual waste was collected by the five Tees Valley Councils using a range of different frequencies and systems with 34 per cent of waste being recycled and the remaining residual waste being sent to an energy waste facility for treatment. In Darlington's case this was 40 per cent. Waste flows of the five Tees Valley Authorities were highlighted within the Presentation.

Further details were provided on the content of the OBC, including, Strategic Waste Management Objectives; Procurement Strategy and Reference Project; Risk Management; Risk Allocation and Contractual Structures; Project Team and Governance; Sites, Planning and Design; Costs, Budget and Finance; Stakeholder Communications; and Timetable.

Particular references were made to the development of the JWMS; collection options modelling; the residual waste options appraisal; and strategic environmental assessment.

Scrutiny was informed that the preferred option was adoption of prevention, reuse and recycling initiatives; introduction of high recycling performance collections including separate food waste collections; and a new energy recovery facility with the ability to utilise the heat produced, through the development of Combined Heat and Power (CHP) facility and that systematic approach had been adopted to identify site(s) for future strategic waste infrastructure.

The next steps were to undertake an eight week consultation process, financial modelling and stakeholder engagement prior to delivery of the draft OBC in March 2019.

Discussion ensued on the life span of the new strategy and whether one facility would be sufficient for the whole of the Tees Valley.

In relation to perspective sites for the facility it was confirmed that the entire Tees Valley had been considered and that three preferred sites had been identified. It was stated that the sites were in industrial areas and that residents and the environment had to be taken into consideration. None of the identified sites were in the Borough of Darlington.

RESOLVED – (a) That the thanks of this Committee be extended to the Project Director for his informative presentation.

(b) That the Project Director be invited to a future meeting of this Scrutiny Committee prior to delivery of the draft outline business case in March 2019.

P23 RAIL HERITAGE AND 2025 CELEBRATION

The Assistant Director, Railway Heritage and 2025 gave a PowerPoint presentation which outlined the Rail Heritage and 2025 Vision, Heritage Action Zone (HAZ) Programme; Governance and delivery arrangements and the next steps.

Details were provided on the policy and strategic context including organisational, tactical and thematic strategies and the three priority workstreams of Experience Darlington, namely, a Railway Town, a Theatre Town and a Town to Visit. References were made to the priorities for action that will enable Darlington to improve its visitor offer for 2026 and beyond, creating significant economic benefits that will support local businesses, increase productivity and create jobs.

A Rail Heritage Board had been established to enhance collaborative working to ensure the vision, by 2026, of the Stockton and Darlington Railway being recognised as a world class heritage attraction which would boost the economic growth potential of the area. The Heritage Action Zone Status and the HAZ Boundary were also highlighted within the presentation.

The Stockton and Darlington Railway Heritage programme had been submitted to Historic England and adopted in May 2018 and covered various project management aspects including background, needs, delivery methods and the initial budget and resources.

To date, forty three projects had been identified and grouped under the four work streams of Conservation and Management, Heritage Attraction Development, Festivals and Events and cross-cutting initiatives.

The Railway Heritage Board had been established and six projects were in progress and three had been completed. Reference was also made to the many Conservation projects that have been or were being undertaken with various organisations and bodies

Work to be completed over the next twelve month was highlighted within the presentation, together with the progress on priority actions.

Discussion ensued on available resources and it was stated that, since the formation of the Tees Valley Combined Authority, culture was high on the economic growth agenda and additional resources were available. It was however stressed that the Council would have to match fund any resources from the Tees Valley and that other funding streams were to be accessed and applied for.

It was confirmed that whilst there were numerous interested organisations and bodies, the Railway Heritage Board had been established to manage the core business. The Friends of Stockton and Darlington Railway were invited onto the Board as it was considered they could best represent voluntary organisations that have an interest in the Stockton and Darlington Railway and the various initiatives.

In relation to access arrangements to the proposed Rail Heritage Quarter at North Road, it was acknowledged that the site was constrained but that this was an issue the appointment of Master Planners had been asked to address. It was hoped that visitors would be encouraged to stay in Darlington thereby boosting the economy.

Members were advised that City of Culture 2025 was a year-long event and that, if successful, the story of the Stockton and Darlington Railway would be a big part of that event. It was stressed that the City of Culture Bid would be submitted in 2021 and the outcome not known until 2022.

Following a question, Members were informed that Pease House was currently occupied by a fast food provider and whilst the appearance of the building needed to be improved, a feasibility study had yet to be commissioned to explore the future contribution of the building to the visitor offer.

RESOLVED (a) That the thanks of this Scrutiny Committee be extended to the Assistant Director, Railway Heritage and 2025 for his informative presentation.

(b) That this Scrutiny Committee be informed of any progress in relation to 2025.

P24 WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE MUNICIPAL YEAR 2018/19

The Assistant Director Law and Governance submitted a report (previously circulated) requesting that consideration be given to this Scrutiny Committee's work programme for the remainder of the Municipal Year 2018/19.

The work programme had been reviewed to link it to the outcomes and conditions in the Sustainable Community Strategy and each topic had been linked to performance indicators from the Performance Management Framework to provide accurate data for Members to use when considering topics and the work they wished to undertake.

The Lead Officer provided Members with an updated position in relation to individual items within the schedule.

The Assistant Director, Community Services confirmed that a report in relation to the Library would be submitted to this Scrutiny Committee in December 2019 and the Chair requested that a report on Red Hall and Healthy New Towns be submitted to a meeting of this Scrutiny Committee early 2019.

RESOLVED – (a) That the current status of the Work Programme be noted.

(b) That the Work Programme be updated to reflect the decisions of this Scrutiny Committee.

P25 SUPPLEMENTARY ITEM(S) (IF ANY) WHICH IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIR OF THIS COMMITTEE ARE OF AN URGENT NATURE AND CAN BE DISCUSSED AT THIS MEETING